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NATIONAL EDUCATION.

REMARKS

ON THE

SPEECH AND PLAN

OF

LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

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CHAPTER I.

Introduction.

The plan of National Education developed by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, on the 6th of March, is the boldest which has yet been proposed to Parliament. The characteristic coolness of the tone in which it was explained ought not to disguise from the public the enormous magnitude of the changes which the Noble Lord contemplates in the educational institutions of the country. He not only proposes to increase the powers and extend the operations of the Committee of Council on Education, but to place the whole of England under *a new machinery of inspection* worked by about one hundred and fifty sub-inspectors,—to authorise the *levying of school-rates by the Magistrates* wherever the *Government Inspector* thinks the means of education deficient,—and to make the education of children compulsory till they are *fifteen years of age*, by forbidding any one to employ a child between nine and fifteen, unless its education is continued on something like a half-time plan!

In two senses this measure would give the *coup de grace* to voluntary education in England; first, by leaving parents no choice or judgment in regard to the duration of their children's education; and secondly, by undermining, as sooner or later it must, the schools now maintained by subscriptions. For when the community shall be taxed for the support of schools both by Government and the Magistracy, that is, both in the form of general taxation and local rates, there will be little inducement to benevolent persons to give their money voluntarily for the same object.

The change proposed, therefore, must be regarded as a radical and vital change,—a change of principle, affecting the character of our English institutions. I can look upon it in no other view than as taking the great and sacred work of education out of the hands of the people, and committing it to the Government and Parliament. It is true, the schools to be built and maintained by rates are proposed to be placed under the management of local committees appointed by the rate-payers. But the intended appointment of a Minister of Education for the House of Commons,

the agency of the Committee of Council on Education, that of the inspectors and sub-inspectors in their employment, the large expenditure of public money, and the determination which LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S measure (if carried) would evince to enforce education by penalties, all prove that henceforth the superintendence of the education of the whole people would become one of the ordinary and acknowledged duties of the Government.

IT behoves the people, then, well to consider, whether they are disposed to entrust the work of training the young to the Government,—whether any necessity for so great a change has been shown,—whether the vast educational agencies which have done so much within the last half century have come to a stand,—whether freedom is so bad a system, and parental responsibility and religious zeal are such inadequate motives, as to compel us to surrender our dearest interests to official management,—whether Government has evinced such wisdom, care, vigilance, and energy in the discharge of its other duties as to prove that it will be the best of educators,—whether especially a work involving the duties and interests of religion may be fitly handed over to Ministers of State and the Bench of Quarter Sessions,—whether the principles of legal compulsion and governmental provision and control, once adopted, may not be extended to other matters of the utmost importance and delicacy, such as religion, the press, industry, and family arrangements,—whether changes like these, from voluntary to official management, are conducive to the independent spirit, the self-relying energies, and the moral welfare of the nation,—and whether the working classes of England are so destitute of natural affection and common sense that they neither are now, nor can ever be expected to be, fit judges of the proper duration of their children's education.

I do not deny that it is possible for the State, with some apparent and outward advantages, to direct both the religious and educational institutions of a country. But I do deny, with the emphasis of the deepest conviction, that the results on the whole are as satisfactory as when the people, thrown upon their own resources, principles, and consciences, provide themselves the means of their religious instruction and of the education of their children. I believe that civil and religious freedom depends upon this self-relying action of the people; and that the more the people are taught to depend upon the Government, the feebler become their virtue and their love of liberty.

THE new-born zeal in this country for national education has been derived chiefly from Prussia, where there is certainly a larger proportion of scholars than in England, but where the habit of dependence on the Government has enfeebled the nation. It is curious that whilst LORD JOHN RUSSELL and others are quoting Prussia as an example to be imitated, some of the profoundest philosophers of that country are bewailing the consequences of over-officiousness in their Government, and admiring the noble fruit yielded by the more popular institutions of England. The late BARON WILHELM VON HUMBOLDT, one of the most enlightened statesmen of Prussia, of whom MADAME DE STAEL said that he was "la plus grande capacité de l'Europe," wrote a work on "*The Sphere and Duties of Government*," which was published after his death, in which he examines with philosophical care the establishments of religion and

education, and arrives at the conclusion that, when connected with the State, they are less favourable to freedom and to eminent virtue than when they are perfectly independent. In that work HUMBOLDT says—

"The grand, leading principle, towards which every argument hitherto unfolded in these pages directly converges, is the absolute and essential importance of human development in its richest diversity; but national education, since at least it pre-supposes the selection and appointment of some one instructor, must always promote a definite form of development, however careful to avoid such an error. And hence it is attended with all those disadvantages which we before observed to flow from such a positive policy; and it only remains to be added, that every restriction becomes more directly fatal, when it operates on the moral part of our nature,—that *if there is one thing more than another which absolutely requires free activity on the part of the individual, it is precisely education*, whose object it is to develope the individual."

"Now all systems of national education, inasmuch as they afford room for the manifestation of a governmental spirit, tend to impose a definite form on civic development, and therefore *to repress those vital energies of the nation*."

"Such an artificial equilibrium, as I have before taken occasion to observe, leads at once to *utter torpidity and stagnation*, or a *depression and deficiency of energy;* while, on the other hand, the greater regard for single objects which is peculiarly characteristic of private education, operates to produce that equipoise more surely and effectually, by a life of different relations and combinations, and that without any attendant sacrifice of energy."

"In fine, if education is only to develope a man's faculties, without regard to any definite civil forms to be collaterally imparted to his nature, there is no need of the State's interference. Among men who are really free, every form of industry becomes more rapidly improved,—all the arts flourish more gracefully,—all sciences become more largely enriched and expanded. In such a community, too, domestic bonds become closer and sweeter; the parents are more eagerly devoted to the care of their children, and, in a higher state of welfare, are better able to follow out their desires with regard to them. Among such men emulation naturally arises; and tutors better befit themselves, when their fortunes depend upon their own efforts, than when their chances of promotion rest on what they are led to expect from the State. There would, therefore, be no want of careful family training, nor of those common educational establishments which are so useful and indispensable."

"I have only to conclude from what has been argued here, that NATIONAL EDUCATION SEEMS TO ME TO LIE WHOLLY BEYOND THE LIMITS WITHIN WHICH POLITICAL AGENCY SHOULD PROPERLY BE CONFINED."

THE other distinguished Prussian whose opinions I shall cite is the well-known CHEVALIER BUNSEN, for so many years the representative of his Government at our Court, whom the *North British Review* justly characterises as "a thoroughly-educated, highly accomplished, well-experienced, pious, patriotic, healthy-bodied, healthy-minded, and in every respect harmonious and well-rounded German gentleman." This able statesman, on his return to his own country, has published a work entitled "*Signs of the Times: Letters to Friends on Freedom of Conscience and the Rights of Christian Congregations:*" and from its pages I make the following extracts:—

"On my return to my own country last summer, after fourteen years' absence in England, I began to compare the impressions with which I had left Germany, with the more ripe views which, through more extended study, and a more large experience, I had obtained; and in doing so I found my mind's eye fixed on two phenomena which stood forward as signs of the times, both by the extensiveness of their operation and by the pregnancy of their significance. I mean *the power of free spontaneous association* on the one hand, and on the other the rising claims and increased power of the clergy or hierarchy. The principle of *voluntary association*, to speak of this first, has been for a long time active in England;

and there is in and about London, and in Great Britain generally, *scarcely any great movement or public work, of which the roots are not to be sought in that principle.* From an association of merchants and capitalists has, within a single century, arisen the British empire in India, one of the greatest in the world. The free State of America arose principally out of free Christian congregations and other English associations ; and the germs of a Canadian union are even now visible, which, through the power of this principle, is destined to play no unimportant part on the theatre of the world. What else but association has, in the course of two decades, called into existence the gigantic works of railway communication, which completely throw into the shade the most important undertakings in the shape of roads and canals, that formerly were the boast of princes and states—works, the construction of which has required more capital than the revenues of all the kingdoms of the world? What other principle than this has during the same period in England *achieved the erection of more new churches and chapels, with congregations of earnest worshippers, than all the governments of Europe and all the clergy had been able to erect during the last four centuries?*"

He traces the activity of free association in "this land of lusty liberty and local energy" mainly to the religious Independents of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and to the Baptists, who had the same religious organisation. He says :—

"The great moral vitality of these two bodies of free associated Christian Churches is shown in the success of their missions, by which whole races have been converted and civilized, whilst the Jesuit missions, in Paraguay, have trained a people altogether unfit for self-government, and who can do nothing out of leading-strings."

"All this has taken place in the course of sixty years. During the same period, or rather during the last 250 years, the state churches of both England and Scotland have shown very little capacity for extension ; the German and Dutch Reformed Churches even less, and the Lutherans no missionary capacity at all. To the same rubric belong all free associations for chapels of ease, scripture readers, and all the various appliances of the Home Mission in London, and other great cities; also the extraordinary activity of the British and Foreign Bible Society. All these associations have sprung into being within the last sixty years, and now they send out thousands of evangelists and apostles to the most distant parts of the globe, and educate as many evangelists and apostles out of the converted natives, to be the germ of improved races to people the world in future ages. The youngest of these free religious associations, the Free Church of Scotland, which has grown under our eyes in the most recent days, has, alongside of a very respectable but somewhat ossified national church, put forth an amount of moral activity which pales the glory of all the state churches in the world."

"I confess, as a German and a Prussian, not without sorrow, that experience and reflection have convinced me of the truth of the political principle, that THE SYSTEM OF CENTRALIZATION IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE EDUCATION OF THE PEOPLE TO TRUE FREEDOM, AND IS A SYSTEM WHICH, IN THE LONG-RUN, WEAKENS MORE THAN IT STRENGTHENS THAT AUTHORITY OF THE STATE IN BEHALF OF WHICH IT IS MAINTAINED. By centralization I mean the common continental system of governing merely by Government officials. The necessary operation of this system is *to keep the people in perpetual tutelage,* to interdict them from performing the slightest function of public life on their own motion, and to prevent the existence of any social organism alongside of itself, and specially to repress that independent life which naturally belongs to every healthy Christian congregation."

How the system of Government interference spreads from interest to interest till it enfeebles the whole, may be inferred from an incidental remark of Mr. Redgrave's, in his account of Prussian manufactures and education in 1853. He remarks :—

"In Prussia the system of centralization and the control exercised by the Supreme Government over local institutions throughout the whole country have

insensibly tended to encourage a dependance upon the Government, and to *supersede that self-reliance and independence which are characteristics of this country*" (England).

I need not remind my readers of the often-quoted and most decisive condemnation of the effects of Prussian education by MR. LAING, in his "Notes of a Traveller." But the opinions already cited call upon Englishmen to reflect long before they adopt a mode of Government interference which is essentially despotic, and discard that spontaneous and independent action which is allied to all that is most noble in national character.

CHAPTER II.

OUR PAST EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS.

IT has always appeared incomprehensible to me that a statesman like LORD JOHN RUSSELL, in treating on the question of Education, should ignore the most important facts relating to it in the history of our own times. It is surely necessary, in order to judge of what the people can do and are likely to do for themselves, to look at what they *have done*. And when we have the most authentic evidence of what they have done, not in other countries or times, but in our own,—not in circumstances differing from ours, but in England itself,—not according to doubtful testimony, but under our very eyes, and the results ascertained by official inquiry,—I cannot conceive of a statesman passing by such evidence as of no value, nor of any candid man failing to acknowledge it and give it its due weight. Yet scarcely ever has LORD JOHN RUSSELL referred to the extraordinary progress in popular education proved to have taken place in the present age. He no doubt thinks the education of the people still unsatisfactory: and that may be true; yet facts may lead us to believe that the deficiency is in course of being rapidly supplied; and when it is a question of revolutionizing education by legislative measures,—of changing the very foundation on which it rests,—of subjecting it wholly to public authority,—and of doing this in spite of conscientious and irreconcileable differences even among those who agree in the main object,—under such circumstances, the experience of the past is of the utmost possible importance to enable us to judge whether the proposed measures are necessary or expedient.

LORD JOHN RUSSELL compares England with other countries: but why does he not compare England with *herself?* He has the means of doing so. Without doing it he cannot arrive at safe conclusions. Suppose a physician called in to a patient, would he neglect to inquire either the history of his complaint, or how the regimen he was then under appeared to agree with him? If he was told—'last week he was unable to leave his bed, but this 'week he is walking about; last week he could not eat anything, but

'to-day he has relished a mutton chop;'—surely no physician who was not desperately anxious to make a bill would ignore these facts, would alter the regimen which was answering so well, or, still less, would begin dosing the patient with medicine of an opposite kind to that he had already taken.

Let us, then, look, for a few moments, at some great facts in the history of England during the past half century, bearing upon the two questions of education and of the means by which education has been advanced.

First, let us look at the Day schools. It is notorious that at the beginning of the century scarcely any of the working classes were able to read or write; but that about that time great educators arose, and great educational societies were formed; and that those societies, with many others, exist to the present day with ever-increasing efficiency. The earliest statistics we possess are those obtained by Lord Brougham's Parliamentary Committee in 1818; the next are those obtained by Lord Kerry's Commission in 1833; and the latest are those contained in the Census of 1851. Prior to 1833 no grant whatever was made by Parliament for schools; and no grant was made before 1847, except in aid of voluntary subscriptions to build school-houses (and a small amount to two normal schools). Now in 1818 the number of day scholars returned was 674,883; of whom 110,062 were in "unendowed New schools," that is, in the National and British schools which then were new, and 40,580 in "endowed New schools." From these figures it is probable that about one-fourth of the day scholars had been added since the beginning of the century. In 1833 the number of day scholars returned was 1,276,947,—being nearly double the number in 1818. In 1851 the day scholars were 2,144,377,—showing still an extraordinary progress, though not equal to the preceding period. The numbers stand thus, together with the proportions which the day scholars bore to the population at the respective periods:—

Day Scholars.

	1818.	1833.	1851.
Number of Scholars	674,883	1,276,947	2,144,377
Proportion to Population	1 in 17·25	in 11·27	1 in 8·36

Some abatement must be made from the progress here represented, on account of the defectiveness of the earlier returns; but with any reasonable deduction on that score, it is evident that the progress was enormous; and it was made with very little aid from the Government in the later period, and with none at all in the earlier period, when the advance was the most striking.

Secondly, Before the day schools there had risen up the Sunday school, in which the instruction is almost wholly of a moral and religious nature, but which is of the utmost importance to the religious interests of the people, and indirectly to their mental improvement. In the official returns already quoted we find the following extraordinary facts:—

Sunday Scholars.

	1818.	1833.	1851.
Number of Scholars	477,225	1,548,890	2,407,409
Proportion to Population	1 in 24·40	1 in 9·28	1 in 7·45

Of this admirable institution it must be observed that it has received no aid from Government, and that its operations are sustained by the agency of no less than 318,135 gratuitous teachers. Moreover it is almost peculiar to England, not having been extensively adopted in any other country except the United States. To pass it over as of no educational importance, and as unworthy of consideration in comparing the educational condition of this and other countries, would show extreme ignorance or unfairness.

Thirdly, the means of religious instruction in the country deserve to be looked at, together with the agency by which they have been created. According to the census of 1851, the churches and chapels existing in 1801 contained 5,171,123 sittings; whereas in 1851 they contained 10,212,563 sittings. But the most remarkable feature of this increase is, that only 188,472 sittings were provided with any help from Parliament, whilst 4,852,968 sittings were provided by the voluntary zeal of Churchmen and Dissenters (and by far the larger number by the poorer of these two bodies). The proportions which the voluntary sittings bore to the Parliamentary was 96 per cent. to 4 per cent! The State granted £1,663,429, and, according to a moderate estimate, voluntary contributors gave £22,423,571.

Places of Worship.

Number of Sittings in 1801		5,171,123
Do. in 1851		10,212,563
Increase		5,041,440
Sittings provided by Parliament ...	188,472	
Do. do. by Subscription ...	4,852,968	
		5,041,440
Amount of Parliamentary Grants	£1,663,429	
Do. of Subscriptions	22,423,571	
		£24,087,000

Fourthly, there have arisen in the present century a vast number of benevolent institutions, having for the most part religious and educational objects, such as the diffusion of Bibles and religious tracts, and missions to the heathen,—institutions the importance of which has obtained for them the admiration of Chevalier Bunsen, as quoted in the preceding chapter; and the whole of which are supported by free contributions. It is impossible to enumerate these institutions: but it may give some idea of them to state that Mr. Sampson Low, Jun., in his work on "The Charities of London," enumerates 491 charities, (of which 294 were founded in the present century,) and the aggregate *annual* income of which is £1,764,733. It is a fact nothing short of wonderful, that whilst the whole number of Bibles in the world is computed to have been only four million copies at the formation of the British and Foreign Bible Society, that Society alone has put in circulation forty millions of copies, or ten-fold the number previously existing. The Religious Tract Society circulated last year the astounding number of twenty-eight millions of tracts and books, in 112 languages and dialects; and since its establishment it has circulated 650,000,000 tracts and books.

Fifthly, another important class of educational institutions is the Mechanics' Institutions and similar societies, which are for the purpose of

carrying on the education of young men, and of furnishing libraries and lectures accessible to the humbler classes of society. The first of these institutions was formed in England in the year 1823. At the Census of 1851, however, including philosophical societies, there were 1,057 of these popular institutions, which probably contain 150,000 members, with nearly a *million* of volumes in their united libraries. In addition to these there is a great number of cheap subscription libraries in the hands of associated bodies or of individual proprietors.

Sixthly, there has been an immense extension of cheap literature, both periodical and otherwise. The ordinary dimensions of the newspaper have increased six or eightfold since the beginning of the century. The number of stamps issued for *newspapers* in the United Kingdom increased as follow :—

Newspaper Stamps issued in 1801 ..... 16,085,085*
Do. in 1854 111,977,408
exclusive of 9,644,779 supplement stamps.

The quantity of *paper* used was as follows :—

Paper charged with duty in 1803 ..... lbs. 31,699,537
Do. do. in 1854 ..... lbs. 177,896,224

Mr. Charles Knight calculated that in the year 1744 the people of England did not expend more than £100,000 a year on books, newspapers, and publications of every kind, but that in 1844 they expended £2,085,600, —being an increase of twenty-fold, whilst the population had only increased two-and-a-half-fold. But the *quantity* of reading matter circulated has increased in a far larger proportion than the price, owing to its comparative cheapness; and we may almost say that the periodical literature for the humbler classes, now so extensive that Mr. Abel Heywood stated five years since that 80,000 publications per week were sold in Manchester alone, is the creation of the present century.

I believe the above great facts, constituting the leading features of educational progress in England, to be as incontrovertible as any facts on record. Will any one deny their vast import? Will any one deny, in the face of them, that our educational progress is not merely possible, probable, and certain, but *actual* and *present*,—that it is proved by experience long enough, large enough, and recent enough to amount to moral demonstration ? Or will it be denied that the agencies of improvement continue and are *still increasing?* Or lastly, can it be doubted that the whole of the advance which has been realised (with the exception of the trifling aid recently given in the building of day schools), has been the work of *the people themselves*, acting for their own and each other's benefit, freely, spontaneously, with all the stimulus of competition, and at the same time with all the harmony which attends those who, whilst differing in political or religious opinions, are exercising undoubted rights and discharging honourable duties ?

If these things are undeniable, is it consistent with common prudence forcibly and radically to alter the system under which they have taken place ?

* About 1,400,000 stamps were probably issued for Ireland at this time, but are not included in the above account, so that the total number for the United Kingdom might be 17,500,000.

CHAPTER III.

What is the Extent of our Educational Deficiency?

There are few subjects on which greater mistakes have been committed by zealous and well-intentioned educationists, than on the extent of popular ignorance in this country. Just before the results of the Census of 1851 were published, Mr. Joseph Kay, author of "The Social Condition and Education of the People in England and Europe," issued a second and enlarged edition of his work, in which he gave a list of the proportions of scholars to population in most of the countries of Europe, and placed England at the *bottom* of the list, as having only 1 *scholar to every* 14 *inhabitants*. Soon afterwards the Census appeared, showing that we had 1 *scholar to every* $8\frac{1}{3}$ *inhabitants*. Mr. W. J. Fox, M.P., stated in Parliament that the proportion was only 1 in 13, and the Rev. Dr. M'Kerrow, of Manchester, that it was 1 in 14. Sir Jas. Kay Shuttleworth, the *Edinburgh Review*, and many other authorities, assumed a proportion very far below the truth.

When this ignorance of statesmen concerning the ignorance of the people was corrected by the publication of the Census, the misconceptions assumed another form. It was said—'there are 4,000,000 children of the 'school age, namely, from five to fifteen years old, and little more than '2,000,000 children of that age are found at school; therefore all the rest 'are growing up *in total ignorance*.' Lord John Russell, in his recent speech, stated these figures; and though he did not draw the inference that 2,000,000 children were left in total ignorance, his hearers and readers would be very likely to assume that that was the case. The Earl of Granville, who, as President of the Committee of Council on Education, ought to be an authority, said on the 13th of March in the House of Lords—

"One fact has been mentioned so frequently that few people can be ignorant of it—that by the last census there were 5,000,000 children in England and Wales between the ages of *five and fifteen*, of whom 2,000,000 were at school receiving more or less of education, 1,000,000 more at work, and 2,000,000 *were neither at school nor at work*."

And the Earl of Shaftesbury, commenting on Lord Granville's statement, drew the very natural conclusion from it, that—

"No doubt there were 2,000,000 children WITHOUT EDUCATION."

The real state of the facts is as follows:—The whole number of children in England and Wales between 3 and 15 years of age, according to the Census, was 4,908,696: between 5 and 15 years, the number was 4,005,716. Lord Granville mistook the two periods. Though some children attend school as early as 3 years old, the period usually considered as the school age does not begin till 5; and, in point of fact, it does not begin with many till 6 or 7 years of age, or with the children of the upper classes even later. Well, the whole number of children at day schools in 1851 was 2,144,378; of whom 278,617 were under 5 years of age, 1,768,231 were between 5 and 15 years, and 97,530 were 15 years old and upwards.

THESE figures, however, are from the less favourable of two educational returns given by the Census. The above figures are those furnished by the "School Returns." The figures furnished by the "Householders' Returns" show the number of children receiving education at school, below fifteen years of age, to be 2,182,741; and if we add the 97,530 scholars above fifteen years of age, the aggregate number of children at school would be 2,280,271. Besides these, the Census gives the number receiving education at home "from tutors or governesses not members of the family" as 44,625,—making a total of 2,324,896 children under education.* And instead of 278,617 of the children at school being under five years of age, the "Householders' Returns" give only 227,364. This would show upwards of 2,000,000 scholars above five years of age. But it would still omit that large number of children who receive education at home, not from "tutors or governesses," but from mothers, aunts, or elder sisters, many of whom are well qualified to instruct.

IT would appear, however, that, in round numbers, there are only about 2,000,000 scholars at school between 5 and 15 years of age, out of a total number of 4,000,000 children within those ages. Is it, then, to be assumed, as is constantly done, that the remaining 2,000,000 children *never* attend school, and grow up *in total ignorance?* There could not be a greater error.

IT is obvious, on consideration, that there could not be 4,000,000 children found in the schools, *unless every individual child in the country from 5 to 15 years of age was attending school the entire* TEN YEARS. But this is impossible. Many children are educated at home; many are sick; not a few are crippled, blind, deaf and dumb, or idiots; many are put to employments at twelve years old, at eleven, ten, or even earlier; many girls are kept at home to help their mothers, or to nurse invalids, or to take care of the younger children where the mother is dead; many are kept from school temporarily, from insufficient clothing, or when the father is out of work; and in large families, among the poorer classes, it is nearly impossible for the parents, especially in bad times, to keep *all* their children at school from their *third* year, or even from their *fifth*, to their *fifteenth* year. Thus, from numerous causes, more or less satisfactory, there must be a very large proportion of children whom it would be vain to expect to see attending school for ten full years.

THE notorious fact is, that children, and especially the children of the poor, receive their education at very different ages, according to the circumstances in which they or their families are found. The whole school age may be considered as extending from *three* to *fifteen*. A few go to school as early as three; a rather larger number at four; considerably more at five or six: the largest number of the children of the working classes are found at school in the five years of life between the ages of six and eleven years old: at eleven and twelve a number are put to occupations more or less regular, both in town and country: at thirteen and fourteen years old comparatively few remain at school.†

* See Census of Education, p. cx.

† We learn from the Census returns, that of all the children in the country who are *fourteen* years of age, 68 per cent. of the boys and 40 per cent. of the girls are "employed" industrially; of those at *thirteen* years old, 46 per cent.

If it be not only unreasonable to expect, but actually impossible, that *all* the children should be at school *ten full years*, from five to fifteen years of age, it becomes an important practical question what number of years may be regarded as a fair average length of schooling. And it may be better to consider what is the fair average of schooling for children between the ages of five and fifteen years,—not forgetting the considerable amount of instruction which they receive before five years of age, but still leaving it out of our present calculation. Many would think that *five* years of schooling, received above five years old, would be as much as it is reasonable to expect from the working classes: others would think six years; and some might even think seven years: but few practical men would demand an *average* of seven years' schooling above five years old. In striking an average, we must remember the large number of children who, from the various causes assigned above, are *prevented* from attending school. An *actual* education of *seven* years, enjoyed generally by such children as are able to attend school, would perhaps not amount to more than an *average* of *six* years founded on the whole number of children of the school age. In my judgment, an *average* of *six* years' schooling is quite as much as it is reasonable to expect from the bulk of the population.

Now, if there are 4,005,716 children within the *ten years* of life between five and fifteen years old, an average of *six years'* schooling would give 2,403,429 who should be at school. The number actually at school between those ages is 1,768,231, according to one of the Census returns, and about 2,000,000, according to the other.

Here, then, is a fair and practical view of our educational deficiency (though, I think, going almost to an extreme): and it is very different indeed from the view given by Lord John Russell, Lord Granville, and Lord Shaftesbury. To show that my estimate is liberal, I may add to the number of scholars whom I have assumed as proper between the ages of five and fifteen, namely, 2,403,429, the 278,617 scholars below five years of age and the 97,530 above fifteen years; the total would then be 2,779,576; which would give one scholar to every $6\frac{1}{2}$ (6·45) of the population. Now the proportion of scholars in Prussia, where education is compulsory, is 1 to every $6\frac{1}{3}$ (6·33) inhabitants.

In this calculation I have gone much beyond many practical educators, and beyond my own former calculations. But I am indifferent to the charge of inconsistency, if I can arrive at the truth. Sir James Kay Shuttleworth, in his work on "Public Education" (1853), said—"I take "the rate of one scholar to *eight* inhabitants as that supported by most "writers on the statistics of education." Lord Brougham, in his speech on education in the House of Lords in 1835, contended that there should be schools for *one-ninth* of the population (exclusive of infant schools.) The Committee of the House of Commons on Education in 1838 reported as the result of their inquiries—

"That it is desirable that there should be means of suitable daily education (within the reach of the working classes) for a proportion of not less than about *one-eighth* part of the population."

of the boys and 28 per cent. of the girls; of those at *twelve* years old, 36 per cent. of the boys and 19 per cent. of the girls; of those at *eleven* years old, 22 per cent. of the boys and 11 per cent. of the girls are "employed."

Mr. Horace Mann, in his Report prefixed to the Census on Education, makes a calculation which I think extreme; but he explains it thus—"in order to ensure an *adequate* amount of education, at a *proper* "*school age*, for *the whole* of the English people, we should have a pro- "portion of one in *six* of the total population." But he adds—

"The number which I venture to suggest must *not* be taken as the number, which, in the present moral condition of the people, can be reasonably *expected* to be found in day schools; but the number which *should* be there, and which may be adopted as the standard *up to which we ought to work*."

This is exactly the manner in which I would explain my former calculations and my present. My former calculations, made in reply to the most exaggerated views of our educational deficiencies, were intended to show what could be "reasonably expected" in the schools;* and my present calculation gives my view of what would be "an adequate amount of education, at a proper school age, for the whole of the English people," and "up to which we ought to work."

But the point to which I am most anxious to direct public attention is, that the existing deficiency of education does not prove that any considerable number of children are "*without* education," or, as some express it, "*wholly uneducated*;" but only that the education is *for a shorter term* than is desirable. The number of children of the school age (from five to fifteen) being 4,000,000, and the number found in school being 2,000,000, this gives an average of *five* years' schooling for EVERY child in England. It is *not*, that half of the children are at school for the whole ten years, and the other half never at school at all. It is that *nearly the whole of the children go to school*, but remain there only so long as to average five years for the entire number. If *all* the children were at school on an average *one* single year, out of the ten years of which the school age consists, we should only find *one-tenth* of them, or 400,000 children, at school at once: if they were there *two* years, we should find 800,000: if *three* years, 1,200,000: if *four* years, 1,600,000: if *five* years, 2,000,000: if *six* years, 2,400,000; and so on. Now this is understood by extremely few of those who have written or spoken on education; but they have imagined, and have given to others the impression, that there is a very great and alarming proportion of the children in England who never go to school at all. It is not so. Our 2,144,378 day scholars and 2,407,642 Sunday scholars represent nearly all the children in the country, but, as regards day schools, *for a shorter term* than is desirable.

If we were to add to the present number of day scholars all the Sunday scholars who are not at the time attending day schools, we should probably find more than 1 child in every 6 inhabitants attending either day or Sunday school: probably it would be 1 in every 5½ inhabitants, who are receiving education of some kind.

In confirmation of the opinion that a very large proportion of the children attend school, though for too short a time, I may adduce the facts recorded at the largest of our prisons and penitentiaries; where it will be found that even the criminals, the very lowest of the people,

* The inquiry which, in my "Letters to Lord John Russell on State Education" in 1846, I proposed to answer was—"What proportion of the whole population may we, *in the social and industrial circumstances of this country, reasonably expect* to have in the day schools of England and Wales?"

had most of them attended school for years. The Rev. Joseph Kingsmill, the chaplain of Pentonville Prison, in his work entitled "Chapters on Prisons and Prisoners" (1854), says :—

"Of the first 1,000 convicts, as they stand on the registry of this prison, in order, (and the history of subsequent thousands is not materially different), 845 had attended some sort of school, as children, for periods *averaging about four years.*"

In the Report of the same Chaplain in 1850, he says :—

"In 3,000 convicts who have passed from this prison, I find 2,441 had attended some sort of school, some of them the very highest in the country."

Similar returns might be given from Parkhurst and Milbank Penitentiaries and from other prisons.

Whatever may be the present deficiency of education in England, it certainly does not arise from the want of *schools.* There is superabundant evidence, from every quarter, that the schools are much more than adequate to the number of scholars attending them. This is the testimony of the Government Inspectors of Schools, speaking of the schools which they suppose to be the best in the country. Still less is there any want of ability and disposition on the part of the people to establish any number of schools for which there is a demand. The existing want is on the part of parents, who, though by no means insensible to the value of education, are satisfied with *too short a term of schooling for their children.* This is an evil not to be cured by legislation, but by the gradual leavening of the working classes with more correct views and higher aspirations.

CHAPTER IV.

Foreign Systems.

The aim of Lord John Russell is to establish in this country a compulsory system of education, sustained by taxation, and inspected and controlled by the Government. In justification of this aim, he adduces the example of foreign countries where such systems exist. He says :—

"Wherever order is valued, in all those countries in which authority is most cared for, systems of education have been adopted. In Austria and in Prussia general systems of education have been framed and established. Where liberty is valued, as in Switzerland and the New England States of America, schemes of education have been devised and have been sanctioned by law. In this country, in which liberty and order have existed together, and in which they are justly prized, we ought not to be behind other nations in framing a system which shall be consonant with the genius of our institutions."

"In Berne and in the other more advanced cantons of Switzerland, nearly one out of every four of the population receives instruction in the public schools. In New England, again, the proportion is one in five. Now, estimating the population of our country in 1851 at 18,000,000—and its amount must have considerably increased since that date—before we can have one out of every five of

our people receiving education, no fewer than 3,600,000, out of the 4,000,000 persons returned in the census as being between five and fifteen years of age, must regularly attend public schools."

Let us, then, cast a glance over the educational systems of foreign countries, and see whether they are worthy of imitation by England, especially in their governmental and compulsory character. Let us see whether their advantages are not more than counter-balanced by their disadvantages;—whether they do not violate either the principles of civil freedom or those of religious liberty;—and whether they do not injuriously affect the interests of religion, either by compelling religious teaching on the one hand, or absolutely excluding it on the other. If I do not mistake, it will appear, that, although in a few countries education is more complete than in England, in none is there a better combination of education with religion and liberty; and that our popular and independent system is on the whole, and considering all the interests of the nation, most worthy of a great and free people. It will be remarked, as we proceed, that there is not a single country where a system of governmental education exists, which Lord John Russell and almost every Englishman would not think, on one ground or another, most seriously objectionable.

France.—The proportion of scholars to inhabitants is 1 to 10.31 (3,164,297 scholars to 34,230,178 inhabitants). Yet the system of national education is theoretically complete, every commune or parish being compelled to maintain schools, and all being under the inspection and control of the Government. Religious instruction is insisted upon, but the children of parents who object may absent themselves from that instruction. All the schoolmasters and mistresses are dependent upon the Government, and must obey their behests; so that the political influence of the schools is made to change with every change of the Government. The schools of the Catholics, Protestants, and Jews are alike comprehended in the system; but no congregation not belonging to the regularly authorised sects can have its school; nor can any private person teach without a Government certificate.

Austria.—The proportion of scholars to population is about 1 in 10 (2,583,603 scholars to 25,304,152 inhabitants)—exclusive of Hungary, where the proportion of scholars is less. Education is entirely governmental; all parishes are obliged to maintain schools, and all parents are bound by law, under penalties, to send their children to school till they are twelve years old, and to the evening schools till they are fifteen. The country is divided (as Lord John Russell proposes for England) into school districts, placed under school overseers, and the schools are under the joint control of the government and the clergy. Religious instruction is made indispensable. All teachers must have Government certificates. The entire system is as arbitrary, as minutely regulated, and as much in the hands of the Government, as the administration of the army itself.

Belgium.—The proportion of scholars to population is 1 scholar to 10·70 inhabitants. The schools are almost entirely in the hands of the Catholic clergy, but education is not compulsory.

Holland.—The proportion of scholars to population is 1 scholar to 7·55 inhabitants (407,252 scholars to 3,073,517 inhabitants). The system

is prescribed by law, and wholly superintended by the Government. For the poor, education is gratuitous. The system is applauded by Mr. Josh. Kay and others as one of the most perfect in Europe; the people are said to be almost universally educated; and the social condition of the Dutch is at least as comfortable as that of any other country. Yet the proportion of scholars very little exceeds that of England. Moreover, education is not free in Holland. No religious congregation is at liberty to maintain a school of its own. No person can teach without a Government certificate. Further, religious instruction is rigidly prohibited in the schools, though an opportunity is allowed the scholars of attending the pastors for that purpose once a week. So carefully is religion banished from the schools, that when I inquired of a schoolmaster near Amsterdam if scripture history was not taught, he replied—"We teach the history of the Jews, but *only in the same manner as we teach the history of the Greeks and Romans;*" that is, without attending to the religious truths to be learned from it.

Sweden.—The proportion of scholars at school to the population is 1 to 11·45; but, including those educated at home, it is 1 to 8—(at school 293,392, educated at home 128,996—total 422,388 scholars, to 3,358,867 inhabitants). The system is governmental and ecclesiastical in the highest degree, and is compulsory on all. Religious liberty scarcely exists in this Protestant country. The people are said to be universally educated, yet the number returned as educated at school is much less than in England; and it is only about the same as in England including those educated at home.

Prussia.—The proportion of scholars to population is 1 to 6·33 (2,605,647 scholars to 16,500,000 inhabitants). The education is entirely in the hands of the Government, which makes it one of its chief concerns. All the religions sanctioned and endowed by the State may be taught in the schools; but they are often taught by infidel schoolmasters. Parents are compelled, under penalties, to send their children to school till they are fourteen years of age; except the children employed in factories, who are required still to attend school part of the day.

Bavaria.—The proportion of scholars to population is 1 to 8 (556,239 scholars to 4,400,000 inhabitants.) The education here is wholly governmental and compulsory. Persons may not be confirmed, nor receive employment, nor (I believe) marry, unless they produce certificates of school attendance. It is perhaps partly in consequence of this law that a fearful amount of illegitimacy exists in Bavaria.

Switzerland.—The proportion of scholars to population averages about 1 in 6 in the different cantons: in Berne it is as high as 1 in 4·3, probably including evening schools: in Neufchatel it is 1 in 6, including the attendance at evening schools: in Zurich it is 1 in 5: in St. Gall and Argau it is 1 in 5½: in Geneva, Schaffhausen, and Lucerne, it is 1 in 6: in Solothurn 1 in 7. Education in Switzerland is governmental and compulsory; yet, owing to the smallness of the cantons, each of which taxes itself under its republican constitution, and manages its own schools, it has something of the voluntary and domestic character. Switzerland has had the honour of producing some of the most distinguished improvers of education, as Pestalozzi, Veihli, and Fellenberg,

who have contributed much to the superiority of education in that country. The instruction in schools is religious. Parents are obliged by law in many of the cantons to send their children to school till they are fifteen years of age. So far do these little cantons carry their interference with personal freedom, that in some of them a man may not marry without proving to the authorities that he is able to support a family.

United States.—In the Northern States there is a very extensive education in common schools, sustained at the public expense; but, owing to the mode of keeping the school returns, it is difficult to state the proportion of scholars to inhabitants. In New England the returns give 1 in 6, 1 in 5, and even 1 in 4: but in most of the States the schools are kept open for very few months in the year;—in New Hampshire the summer schools are only kept open 8½ weeks and the winter schools 9½ weeks: in Maine the schools are open 19 weeks in the year. In Massachusetts the utmost attention is paid to education, and the proportion of scholars to population is very large. The combined length of time of the summer and winter schools being open, however, is only 7½ months, *i. e.* 3¾ months in the summer and 3¾ months in the winter. In the summer the scholars are in the proportion of 1 in 5 of the population, and in the winter of 1 in 4½: but the average attendance in the summer is only equal to 1 in 6½ of the population, and in winter to 1 in 5⅔. In the State of New York the number of scholars is apparently very great; but as they move from school to school, and are entered in the returns of each school which they attend, it is difficult to judge of the actual number. The attendance is thus given in 1854:—

State of New York.—School Attendance.

Scholars.		*Length of Attendance at School.*
200,473	.....	Less than 2 months.
211,367	.....	2 months and less than 4.
178,330	.....	4 ,, ,, 6.
125,745	.....	6 ,, ,, 8.
68,742	.....	8 ,, ,, 10.
39,059	.....	10 ,, ,, 12.
8,765	.....	12 months.
4,416	coloured children.	
31,767	scholars in private schools.	
868,664	Total.	

As the population of the State was in that year about 3,250,000, the proportion of scholars to population would appear from the return to be more than 1 in 4. But when we see what the nature of the attendance was,—that about a quarter of the whole attended less than 2 months, that a half of the whole number attended less than 4 months, and three quarters of the whole attended less than six months,—it is evident that either the returns are fallacious as to numbers or that the education must be of little value. In the city of New York the whole number of scholars returned in 1854 was 146,450, but the average attendance was only 45,390. As the population of the city is 675,000, the number of scholars on the books is equal to 1 in 4·61; but the average number attending the schools is only equal to 1 in 14·87! Admitting, however, that the number of children attending school in the northern States is very great, it is a

serious consideration that religious instruction is all but totally excluded from the schools. The law of Massachusetts provides that—

"It shall be the duty of the president, professors, and trustees of the University of Cambridge, and of the several colleges, and of all preceptors and teachers of academies, and all other instructors of youth, to exert their best endeavours to impress on the minds of children and youth committed to their care and instruction the principles of *piety, justice, and a sacred regard to truth, love to their country, humanity and universal benevolence, sobriety and frugality, charity, moderation, and temperance, and those other virtues which are the ornament of human society, and the basis upon which a republican constitution is founded;* and it shall be the duty of such instructors to endeavour to lead their pupils, as their ages and capacities will admit, into a clear understanding of the tendency of the above-mentioned virtues to preserve and perfect a republican constitution, and secure the blessings of liberty, as well as to promote their future happiness, and also to point out to them the evil tendency of the opposite vices."

Of this law the Board of Education of New York says—"higher than that the State cannot go, simply as a State;" but Lord John Russell truly remarks of it, that "the words might have been enacted by the Senate of Rome *before the introduction of Christianity.*" So that the necessary price paid for the union of all in common schools is the abandonment of religious teaching.

I have thus very briefly reviewed the educational systems of the principal foreign countries; and it will be seen that the proportions of scholars to population in the larger countries are for the most part *below* the proportion in England, and that the countries which boast the highest number of scholars *infringe upon either civil, personal, or religious liberty, or compromise the interests of religion itself.*

When it is remembered that in England the proportion of day scholars to the population is 1 in 8·36, and of Sunday scholars 1 in 7·45; that of late years the progress has been most rapid and steady; that these results are realised in combination with unlimited freedom of teachers, of parents, of communities, and of religious bodies; and that the working of the system in England is favourable both to the independence and self-reliance of the people, and to the mutual sympathy of different classes of society;—I submit that the English system is not only most consonant with right principle and with English liberty, but most conducive to the moral, religious, and social well-being of the nation.

CHAPTER V.

Objections to Lord John Russell's Plan.

Lord John Russell aims to force upon the people of England a most unreasonable length of education, at an extravagant expense, and by laws which are of the essence of despotism. If the people of England submit to this miserable copying of Continental absolutism, they must have shut their eyes to the advantages of freedom, and have lost all faith

in its great and glorious principles. It surely is obvious to common sense that to *compel* parishes to establish and sustain schools is not only to take away all the merit and the honour of spontaneous action, and thus *pro tanto* to destroy (by superseding) the patriotism, benevolence, and public spirit which have done such great things for education, but it is to violate liberty itself. Nor is it less obvious that to *compel* parents to educate their children is to supersede one of the most sacred of parental obligations, and thereby as far as possible to annihilate that obligation. And what agency does Lord John Russell substitute for the superseded agency of parents, and of the patriotic and religious friends of education? The agency of Government functionaries!—a vast educational police!—a host of prowling Inspectors, thrusting their noses not only into every school, but into every workshop, of the kingdom!—a system of penalties, under which every employer of labour will be liable to be fined by the Magistrate if he does not provide and pay for the education of every boy or girl in his employment under fifteen years of age! Will Englishmen submit to this odious despotism, brought by Lord John Russell from Prussia and Austria—I suppose as the lesson learnt in his late schooling at Berlin and Vienna?

If we are to make education compulsory, and to allow half a dozen Ministers and Secretaries in Downing-street to enforce it, through the means of inspectors and justices, of pains and penalties, all over the kingdom, what duty is there so sacred that we may not suffer it to be taken out of our hands? *Religion*, for example. It is even more sacred than education, and, I lament to say, more neglected. Is Parliament, therefore, to appoint a Minister of Religion, with a seat in the House of Commons,—to compel every parish to build churches, by public rates, to contain every inhabitant,—to compel the people to attend them, under penalty of being brought before the magistrate, and fined or sent to prison,—and, in order to execute the law, to divide the country into religious districts, placed under the care of religious inspectors, who shall lay informations before the magistrates against all who absent themselves from church?—and if all this should not succeed, are we to have Members of Parliament gravely setting forth the failure, assuming that it is their duty to rectify the public neglect, and proposing new laws more inquisitorial and penal than before? Or, may not *Industry* be thought a fit subject to be reduced to Government inspection and regulation? Industry is of greater importance to the country, not only in its commercial prosperity, but even in its tranquillity and moral interests, than any thing whatever, except religion. Is Industry, then, to be put under police *surveillance* in 80 or 800 industrial districts, with as many inspectors; and every man who does not work from such an hour in the morning to such an hour in the evening to be brought before the magistrates, fined, or imprisoned? Or, again, *the Press*. This is of vital importance to *every* interest of the country; yet (with all its vigour and power) see how defective is its state, both in regard to our book and periodical literature, as well in quality as in quantity. Shall the Press be subject to a Government Censorship? Shall it be obligatory on every parish to support a newspaper, at the public expense? and shall every family be compelled to take a copy? and not only to take it, but to read it,—of course in presence of the Government Inspector, for a certain length of time every day?

THERE is nothing in any of these supposed cases more inquisitorial, more despotic, more pedantic, more extravagant, or more absurd, than LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S resolutions for compulsory education at this moment awaiting discussion in the House of Commons. We defy any man to show any substantial difference in principle between the cases. Society is interested in the religion, the industry, and the reading of the people, just as much as in their education: and in all these matters there are great deficiencies. If in regard to Education Parliament is to overlook all the natural motives and obligations which prompt the people to secure it, all the enormous progress it has actually been making under our own eyes, and all the principles of liberty which require that it shall be left to the uncontrolled discretion of the people themselves, why may not Parliament do the same with regard to Religion, Industry, and the Press?

IT is true LORD JOHN RUSSELL has by stealthy steps furnished himself with precedents for any thing he may hereafter attempt in this line. If, when he began his measures, he had candidly explained the lengths to which he should ultimately go, he would not have had the remotest chance of success in the first step. He began with a grant of £10,000 in aid of the building of school-rooms. Then he made it annual, and increased it to £20,000, to £30,000, to £50,000, to £75,000, to £100,000, to £150,000, to £200,000, to £250,000, to £300,000, and to £375,000.* Then he established the Committee of Council on Education—an unconstitutional body, with undefined powers. Then he appointed School Inspectors, who were gradually increased till they now number forty-one. Then he made large grants to Normal Schools; and set up one purely Governmental Training School at Kneller-hall, which, after costing an enormous amount of money, has been abandoned as an utter failure. Then he introduced Minutes for grants to teachers, pupil teachers, stipendiary monitors, and Queen's scholars: and in order to win over the Wesleyans, he confined the grants to schools in which the authorised version of the Scriptures was read. Then he introduced Minutes for Roman Catholic schools, of course abandoning the stipulation for the reading of the Bible. Then for Jews' schools. Then he required certificates for teachers; but, finding that that prevented the rapid spread of the Governmental agency, he dispensed with the certificates and introduced simple registration. Then he made grants of school-books and school-materials, and gradually reduced the price of them so low as to destroy free competition, and to give Government a virtual monopoly. Then he introduced capitation grants to schools in small towns and rural districts, allowing to each school under Government inspection so much per head for every boy and girl in the school. Then he made grants to teachers of night schools, to industrial schools, and to schools of design, the latter of which have been withdrawn as a failure.

* As this pamphlet goes to press, I learn that the estimate for Education this year is £451,000,—that is, an advance of £76,000 on the estimate for 1855, which itself was an advance of £75,000 on the estimate for 1854! A pretty pace the Committee of Council on Education is going! and a pretty House of Commons we have, to sanction so scandalous a profusion of the public money! I know a Member of the House of Commons who urged the Committee of a school to which he subscribed to take a Government grant, saying that if they did *it would enable him to reduce his own subscription!* Thus our Representatives are voting away the public money, to save their own pockets!

And now, having successively taken all these steps to bring the education of the people under Government influence and control, Lord John Russell comes forward, and acknowledges that they are to a great extent a failure. But, instead of receding from his policy, he makes fresh and enormous demands upon Parliament. He tells them they must not rest till they have increased the number of scholars from 2,000,000 to 3,600,000,—that, as the people will not accept this amount of education voluntarily, they must be *forced* to accept it,—that the cost will be £3,240,000 (perhaps it may turn out, if under Government management, to be £6,000,000 or £7,000,000)—that the whole country must be divided into eighty school districts, with as many Church Sub-Inspectors and a proportionate number for the other sects,—that parishes and districts where these Inspectors and the Committee of Council think there is a deficiency of education must be "compelled" to levy a school rate,—that at present the Magistrates shall be empowered to levy the rate, without asking the consent of the rate-payers,—that there shall be a form of religion in the schools to be helped, inasmuch as the Scriptures shall be read there, but without any other security for religious instruction,—that all employers of children and young persons between nine and fifteen years of age shall be *required* half-yearly to furnish certificates of their attendance at school and *to pay for their instruction*,—and, finally, that prizes shall be offered, school fees diminished, and libraries and evening schools formed—all, of course, at the public expense.

The plan of Lord John Russell is open to the following objections :—

Objection 1. *It is despotic in its character.* It makes education in a double sense compulsory, first, by compelling parishes to provide schools, and secondly, by compelling employers to provide and pay for the continued education of all children in their employ till they are fifteen years of age. This is an outrage on English freedom. It violates principles which are of inestimable value. If it should apparently succeed in bringing a certain number of children under education, it will do it at the expense of that liberty which is more important than education itself. If the principles of freedom should be violated for the sake of enforcing education, they may soon be violated for the sake of enforcing religion and whatever else is socially desirable, however reason and experience may show that they are not fit subjects for Government interference.

Objection 2. *It subjects the Education of the country to the Government.* It proposes to organize the whole country for this purpose into school districts, under the care of 41 Inspectors (the present number), and probably 150 Sub-Inspectors (80 of them belonging to the Church and the remainder to other communities). Thus about 200 Inspectors and Sub-Inspectors, appointed by the Government and responsible to them, would constitute a great educational police, having England and Wales under their *surveillance.* Never were the many defects and abuses of Government management so fearfully illustrated as in our own day, when we have seen half an army perish from the effects of official negligence, divided responsibility, blind adherence to routine, and wretched incompetency. If, according to the Marquis of Lansdowne, "it is universally acknowledged that Governments are the worst of cultivators, the worst of

manufacturers, and the worst of traders,"—and if we have seen such egregious mismanagement in the departments which properly belonged to them,—what hope can there be that they will efficiently manage the infinitely delicate and important work of education? Moreover, the committing of that work to them would be another step towards centralization, and towards that bureaucracy which is a poison and a curse to every nation on whom it is imposed.

Objection 3. *It would be oppressive to the Poor and vexatious to Industry.*—If children could not be employed without carrying on their education till they were fifteen years old, at the expense of the employer, the consequence would be, that in a vast number of cases *the children would not be employed at all.* Many employments do not admit of being carried on by relays or by persons working half time: and a very large proportion of employers would refuse to have the trouble, annoyance, and expense of half-time workers, for each of whom they must obtain certificates half-yearly, present them to inspectors or policemen, and be liable to be summoned before the magistrate and fined if they were not regular. Such a law would disgust them and excite their indignation. The effect would be, that they would employ no young persons under fifteen years old; for no law can compel them to employ labour, if it is not their interest and wish to do so. If they did, they would probably deduct from the wages whatever they had to pay for the schooling. Thus, by direct and indirect operation, the labour of children under fifteen years old would be rendered of little or no value to their families. To many branches of industry the law would be very injurious, as compelling them to employ more expensive labour. But to the poor it would be a most severe infliction. According to the Census of 1851, the following were the numbers of children employed industrially in England and Wales at different ages:—

Children Employed Industrially.

Years old.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.	Years old.	Boys.	Girls.	Total.
5	425	780	1,205	11	43,173	21,110	64,283
6	1,030	1,213	2,243	12	69,275	35,586	104,861
7	2,128	2,570	4,698	13	88,485	52,066	140,551
8	7,032	5,400	12,432	14	128,431	74,869	203,300
9	14,287	9,674	23,961				
10	27,508	14,787	42,295			Total	599,829

If these 600,000 children earn, on the average, 2s. a week, they will bring to their families an aggregate amount of £60,000 a week, or £3,120,000 a year: and if they should only average 1s. 6d. a week, they will bring £48,000 a week, or £2,340,000 a year. Such is the produce of juvenile labour to the families of the poor: and a large part of this would be taken away by Lord John Russell's plan. In addition to this loss, every father of a family would have to pay a school rate.

Objection 4. *It would be self-defeating.* If a large proportion of the children who are now employed and earning wages were prevented from obtaining employment, the working classes would be *less able than they are at present to pay for the education of the younger children.* Thus, instead of increasing the amount of education in the country, Lord John Russell

might by his despotic law actually *diminish* it. The elder children would in a great many cases not continue at school, but be idle in the streets, exposed to temptation, and liable to swell the number of juvenile criminals; whilst the younger children would also be in the streets, because their parents had lost the help formerly received from the elder. Such would probably be the consequence of attempting to *force* education beyond the point which public opinion warrants. It would be like a law forbidding marriage before a certain age; of which the effect would assuredly be, not so much to enforce prudence as to increase the amount of vice and illegitimacy. No one would be more desirous than myself to induce parents by moral suasion to lengthen the term of their children's education: but this is a moral work, requiring time and patience: and to attempt to lengthen education by pains and penalties would recoil upon the country with complicated disaster and evil.

Objection 5. *The plan aims at an extravagant and impracticable duration of schooling.* Lord John Russell avows that it is his object so to increase the number of children in schools that they shall amount to 3,600,000, being 1 in 5 of the whole population. This proportion of scholars may be attainable in countries where the population consists chiefly of small yeomanry, or domestic manufacturers, or middle class tradesmen, such as are found in Switzerland, Saxony, and New England, especially if under laws making education compulsory both on the parents and the community: but it is utterly out of the question in a country like England, in which an immense proportion of the population are strictly labourers, either in agriculture or manufactures. To neglect this consideration, of the difference in the circumstances of the bulk of the population, and to expect as long a term of schooling among labourers as among the middle classes, is an error of the first magnitude, and quite unworthy of a statesman. Even in Prussia, where the proportion of labourers to the whole population is far less than in England, and where children are compelled by law to attend school till they are fourteen years of age, the number of scholars is only 1 in 6·33 of the inhabitants. In Holland, one of the best educated countries in Europe, the proportion is one in 7·55. In Bavaria it is 1 in 8. In Austria it is 1 in 10; in France 1 in 10·81; in Belgium 1 in 10·70; in Sweden 1 in 11·45, and (including those educated at home) 1 in 8. In not one of these countries is there nearly so large a proportion of operatives to the whole population as in England—a country consisting of large farms and vast manufactories, where, nevertheless, the number of scholars is 1 in 8·36 of the inhabitants. Then how extravagant is it to demand in this country an attendance of 1 in 5 in school! This would require an actual schooling of nearly TEN YEARS for *every* child in the country, including the working classes; for though it would only be an average of *nine* years on the entire number of children of the school age, yet, considering the children who are absolutely prevented by sickness and other causes from attending school, it would practically require an attendance of *ten* years from those who were not thus prevented. This is so extravagant as to discredit the judgment of him who proposes it. No theorist in this country has yet put forth so absurd a demand. It has been shown that Lord Brougham asked for an attendance in school of 1 in 9 of the population,—the Committee of the House of Commons of 1838 for 1

in 8,—and Sir James Kay Shuttleworth for 1 in 8; but Lord John Russell demands 1 in 5! Well may the man who in his closet forms such theories abandon the principles of liberty, and call despotic laws to his aid!

Objection 6. *The measure is perfectly unnecessary.* We possess, on official evidence, the great facts of the rapid and steady progress of education during the whole of the present century. From 1818 to 1851, according to the census, the increase of day scholars and Sunday scholars was as follows:—

Years.	Day Scholars.		Sunday Scholars.	
	Number.	Proportion to Population.	Number.	Proportion to Population.
1818	674,883	1 in 17·25	477,225	1 in 24·40
1833	1,276,947	1 in 11·27	1,548,890	1 in 9·28
1851	2,144,377	1 in 8·36	2,407,409	1 in 7·45

I should have thought these facts so triumphant a proof of the power of voluntary education, as to have induced every reasonable man to trust our future progress to the system which had worked so well in the past. But the itch for legislating is more intolerable than the Scotch fiddle, and Lord John Russell is one of the unhappy victims of the complaint. May we not reasonably confide in such motives and circumstances as have undoubtedly produced our past advance? Among those causes are the following: viz., the pecuniary and other substantial advantages secured by education, which are daily becoming more understood and appreciated by all classes;—the good sense and right feeling of parents, who cannot fail to see the benefits of education to their children;—the shame that attaches to ignorance;—the ever-increasing number and excellence of our educational institutions, including both those for the young and those for adults;—the public spirit and patriotism of many, and, still more, the zeal of religious communities, who honourably compete with each other in their efforts to educate the people;—the extraordinary increase of cheap literature, in all its forms, both attractive and useful:—the natural tendency of knowledge to diffuse itself;—and the spirit of the age. If these natural motives are not to be trusted, then there is no lesson to be learnt from experience, nor is any faith or confidence due to the great principles of freedom; but we must turn back in the career in which England has set an example to the nations, and become humble imitators of Continental despotisms.

Objection 7. *The plan would be enormously expensive.* If there is a truth universally admitted, it is, that Governments work more expensively than any other parties. Lord John Russell himself estimates the cost of educating his 3,600,000 scholars at 18s. a head per annum, or £3,240,000. But this is one of the financial errors to which Lord John is prone; for he has merely taken the rate of cost in schools managed by societies and congregations, and which is expressly stated in the published accounts to be "exclusive of Government grants" to teachers, pupil teachers, schools, &c. In the year 1854-5 the Committee of Council expended £326,436 in aid of schools containing 500,000 scholars; that is, at the rate of 13s. per scholar,* over and above the expenditure by the managers of the schools,

* See "Minutes of the Committee of Council on Education for 1854-5," pp. 131, 136.

and making a total expenditure equal to 31s. per head. At the same rate, the education of 3,600,000 children would cost £5,580,000 : and, as the constant and rapid tendency is, both to increased expenditure in proportion to the number of scholars, and to throwing the expense on public rates and taxes, it is a moderate estimate to assume that the number of scholars mentioned by LORD JOHN RUSSELL could not be educated under Government management for less than £6,000,000 or even £7,000,000 a year ! ! ! Thus the prospective amount to be paid by the public in rates and taxes, for education, when the system (to use LORD JOHN'S word) is "complete," would EXCEED THE WHOLE AMOUNT OF THE POOR RATE (INCLUDING THE COUNTY RATE) ! ! !* A pleasant prospect, truly, for the farmers and other ratepayers ! A tolerable "price" to pay for the "whistle" of Government education !

OBJECTION 8. *Its inevitable tendency would be to destroy the benevolent and religious agency by which the present schools have been formed, and to bring them under secular authorities, Governmental or Municipal.* No one can believe that 150 new Sub-Inspectors could be placed in eighty school districts, without cutting themselves out work, to employ their time and earn their salaries. That work must be in the establishment of new schools, and those schools are to be supported by rates, and managed by committees elected by parish vestries. Now unless the number of scholars should be increased, (which I believe it would not), the effect of the new schools would just be to empty the old schools. If the vestry school-committee should fix the school-fee extremely low, or make the education gratuitous, they would of course draw off the children from the other schools. A further effect would be, to take away the contributions which support the existing schools ; because it is not likely that persons will long subscribe voluntarily to the same object for which they have to pay rates. And still further, it would give the general impression that education is taken entirely under the care of the Government, and therefore the schools will be neglected by those who have hitherto visited and managed them. Thus it is certain that LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S plan would sooner or later supersede the present managers of schools, who act from religious principle and love for education, and substitute for them the committees chosen by Vestry meetings. Is there the least hope that under such management the schools could have anything of a religious character ? If they had, it must be as the result of the triumph of one sect over other sects. Therefore the alternative before us is, either *contentions of religious sects*, or the *neutralisation* of this Black Sea of education by wholly *banishing religion* from the schools. In the first instance, we should probably have a desperate internecine war, and in the end secular schools under the management of committees who would agree never to mention the subject of religion. Not only would religion be banished from the management, but all heart and soul would be banished with it. Moreover, the new schools, after having destroyed the old schools, might themselves be starved by the parsimony of rate-payers. I do not pretend to say how this might be, because experience shows that public affairs, whether in Parliament or in parishes,

* The total amount of Poor Rates for the year ended Lady-day, 1854, was £6,973,220, including not only all the expenditure on the Poor, but all the County Rate, expenses of Registration, Jury Lists, Vaccination, &c. &c.

are very generally managed with alternate profusion and niggardliness. But if the views of those who are most zealous for local management and local rates, as to the present disposition of the rate-payers towards education, be correct, the schools would be put upon short commons, and soon reduced (like the horse in the story) to live upon a straw a day. I solemnly believe that education would suffer immensely,—that LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S complicated machinery would come to a stand,—and that the only resort then would be to a system wholly compulsory, and wholly subject to an educational Dictator in Downing Street.

OBJECTION 9. *Either religion itself or religious liberty, or both, would greatly suffer.* I have endeavoured to show how the system would probably work. But it is desirable to look at other ways in which it might work. For example, it might in some places and at first result in putting the National Schools on the public rates; in which case the Dissenters, most of whom conscientiously decline to receive public money for their own schools, would be compelled by the school-rate to pay for the Church schools, in which the Church catechism was taught, possibly with every Puseyite interpretation and addition, whilst they themselves received no portion of the rate. What would this be but *a New Church Rate*, far heavier than the old, and far more bitter? For the very rates which they paid, but of which they could not partake, might be employed so to lower the school fees in the National Schools (on pretence of regard for the poor), as inevitably to destroy the schools of Dissenters. Can any thing be conceived more injurious and offensive? Yet this is the present operation of the Parliamentary grants, and especially of the new capitation grants in small towns and rural parishes;* and it would be indefinitely aggravated by LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S plan.—Again, the system might operate thus—to take into the support of the parochial school-committee the schools of Roman Catholics and Unitarians, and thus to compel all evangelical sects, the Church included, to pay for the teaching of doctrines which they most solemnly repudiate. This, although in a civil point of view perfectly just, would cause extreme discontent, and might lead to a refusal to pay the rates. Again, a school committee chosen by the vestry might in many places cut the Gordian knot of the religious difficulty, by resolving not merely not to support any denominational schools, but even to support secular schools in avowed opposition to them, and for the purpose of destroying all denominational teaching. The risk of this would be very great, especially in large towns: and I believe the Dissenters would be driven, by the extreme injustice with which they were treated, to co-operate with men of no religion, for the purpose of withholding grants from Church, Roman Catholic, and Unitarian schools. My firm belief is, that in London, Manchester, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, and other large towns, LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S plan would work to destroy all schools except secular ones,—and this not because a majority of the rate-payers disapproved of religious teaching, but because different sects were

* It is a striking illustration of the unconstitutional working of the Committee of Council on Education, that the system of capitation grants was introduced by a Minute of the Committee, laid silently before the House, but never made the subject of any official statement, or of the slightest discussion, or even mention, in the House. By another Minute, without the shadow of necessity, the Committee of Council are this year proposing to extend the capitation grants to the schools of the large towns,—thus including the whole of England and Wales;—a most wanton and shameful waste of the public money.

so ill-treated by the system as to be driven to combine against all religious schools.—The security which Lord John Russell would take against this deplorable issue is no security at all. He would require the Bible to be read in the schools. What signifies that, even if he could enforce it? The mere reading of half a dozen verses, without explanation, enforcement, or questioning, would be of no more moral or religious use than the reading of an Act of Parliament. Besides, Lord John himself would be the first to break through his gossamer restriction, as he did in 1847, by the Minute admitting Roman Catholic schools to receive grants, a few weeks after carrying a vote for schools in which the Bible in the authorized version alone was to be used.—The practical result of Lord John Russell's plan, then, would be, to banish religious teaching from our schools: and in my opinion nothing could be more detrimental to the religious and moral interests of the country. On the other hand, let it be well observed that the Voluntary system naturally allies itself with religion as its best and necessary support; and under that system each denomination acts with perfect freedom, and yet without giving the slightest offence to any other. It is the *only* educational system which can possibly give to the people of England the inestimable advantages of *freedom, justice, self-reliance, civil harmony, and religious efficiency.*

CHAPTER VI.

Conclusion.

In preceding chapters I have endeavoured to show that the great and despotic measure of National Education proposed by Lord John Russell is false in principle, extravagant in its aim, uncalled for by the state and progress of education in England, not recommended by the systems which exist in foreign countries, open to practical objections of enormous magnitude, and an outrage on the principles of English liberty.

It evinces that entire absence of *faith* in self-action and self-government, which Lord John Russell displays in all that regards religion, and which he extends equally to all that regards education. A more inveterate Erastian never lived. He would pay, inspect, and control all sects, as well as all schools.

Though a Churchman, he is determined to hold the Church in bonds, which, however silken or golden, are not the less binding. And as to the Voluntary system, he hates it with a perfect hatred, and would undermine it or break it down with the utmost pleasure. Now this absence of faith is most unworthy of an English statesman, because it is opposed to the generous and noble spirit of English freedom. It is the very spirit of Prussian statesmanship. The policy which springs from it is shallow, heartless, and latitudinarian. It has no due regard either for the purity of the Christian Church or for its freedom. Its single merit is, that it is opposed to hierarchical domination. Its blindness consists in not perceiving that the best antidote to that domination is the equal and absolute freedom of all sects.

THE policy which becomes England in regard to education is, to proclaim FREEDOM TO ALL and GOVERNMENT PATRONAGE TO NONE. Wherever Freedom has been tried, it has proved far stronger for religion, for intellectual development, for industry, for enterprise, for social advancement, for whatever constitutes the power and dignity of nations, than the best-devised systems of arbitrary rule. Like all things human, it has its defects; and if statesmen will always be gazing at those defects with microscopic eye, and then paring down its institutions first on this side and then on that, they will soon reach its heart, and for ever stop its noble pulsations.

COMPARE England with France or Germany; and there are undoubtedly points of superiority on the part of the latter. They are better drilled,—have more symmetrical government and more perfect police,—are more tranquil, or rather more silent (when not in a state of revolution),—have more cultivated taste,—have each branch of industry cared for by their governors,—have more beautiful cities, monuments, and public buildings,—and have all their religious sects, as well as all their schools, supported and superintended by the State. But, on the other hand, in England you have the grand spectacle of a self-governed people,—wielding a free press,—upholding in a great degree their own religion and education,—forming numberless associations for charity and self-improvement,—originating the mightiest projects of art and commerce,—conducting an unrivalled industry,—moving and controlling their political rulers by constitutional means. Which of these countries is the more worthy of admiration? In which does the tranquillity rest on more solid foundations? Which people enjoy the higher sense of dignity? In which is there more real virtue, piety, and charity? Which has more spring and energy, more soul and life?

NOW the policy of LORD JOHN RUSSELL is calculated *pro tanto* to exchange the English for the Continental character; and I have enough of the English spirit to regard it with detestation and scorn.

HE has been advancing step by step to the object of bringing the Education of the people wholly under the inspection and control of the Government; and he has had statecraft enough to do it by the most subtle of agencies, bribery. But now, having by this means made good his footing, he proclaims that the whole country must be organised under the Committee of Council, that is, under a Minister of Instruction—perhaps his noble self,—that parishes must be "compelled" to provide schools,—and that employers must be "compelled" to provide and pay for the education of the young in their service till they are fifteen years of age!

VAST and complicated as is the machinery which he proposes to construct, it is evident to the slightest consideration that it is preparatory to a simpler and more complete educational despotism. Not only cannot such complex machinery work, but the host of new inspectors to be created are certain to complain and suggest, till the petty local authorities are made to give way to the central authority, and till the *compulsion* is made universal by being applied to parents and guardians, as well as to employers.

I hope the Parliament and people of England will not shut their eyes to this inevitable tendency. If LORD JOHN RUSSELL'S measure should be carried, what we have before us is a system of National Education WHOLLY GOVERNMENTAL AND WHOLLY COMPULSORY.

If the system could be kept—as it is to be in a very small measure at the beginning—in the hands of local elective boards, it is quite certain, from the considerations already mentioned as to the religious jealousies and difficulties, that the schools would ere long be made completely *secular*. But the Central Government, placed at the fountain-head of legislation, and ever on the watch to increase its power, would be almost sure to get the better of the local boards. This might prevent the absolute and formal exclusion of religion from the schools. But probably only for a time. A school-rate for religious schools would be offensive to so many parties, and would involve so much injustice,—and the denominational schools would so thwart the projects of our *doctrinaire* politicians,—that I believe ere long the religious element would be diluted and diluted (as has been the case in the United States) till it wholly disappeared.

Thus there are two great evils to be dreaded,—first, that the education of the people shall be made wholly Governmental and compulsory, and secondly, that religion shall be excluded from it. Either of these evils is of enormous magnitude, in itself, and in its ulterior consequences upon the public character. I pretend not to say how soon they may be realized, or which of them first; but, judging from the experience of the past, in England and in other countries, I believe they would both be realized in the end. By governmentalizing education, we should lower the spirit and self-reliance of the people: by secularizing it, we should fatally injure the religious principles of future generations.

If it should be thought by any that I take exaggerated views of the evils in prospect, I reply that it is not easy to exaggerate the influence of measures affecting the schools of a country. Of all the views which I took, years ago, either of the then actual extent of education, or of the probable operation of the Minutes in Council of 1846, I do not remember any which have not been borne out, by the Census, and by the ever-increasing expenditure under those Minutes.

As an illustration of the fatal effect which may flow from specious but false liberality on the part of the Government, I may refer to the important question of school books. Scarcely anything is of more importance than the school books, because by them the character of the education is moulded: they are the fountain heads of knowledge and of principles: and they ought to be in a course of constant improvement. Well, the Committee of Council on Education make grants to schools in England of the school books published by the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland, and at prices *below what those books could be produced for by booksellers*. This seems a very kind and a very useful thing. But what is the consequence? It is destroying *the competition of authors and booksellers in this department of literature*. It has put an end to the employment of first-rate talent in this line. By so doing, it has given a monopoly to the Government; and we shall soon see all the ordinary fruits of monopoly, in badness of quality, in backwardness of scientific information, in the stereotyped governmental character of the sentiments, if not even in the cost of the books. For though the schools obtain their books at a low price, the public purse makes up the difference. I might support this view by the well-reasoned memorial presented not long since by the eminent publishers, Messrs. Longman and Mr. Murray,

remonstrating (of course in vain) against the proceedings of the Committee of Council. I say of course in vain; because it is one of the most sickening things in Government action that departments go on for years, and even for generations, in obstinate error, superciliously defying counsel and wearying out complaint.

I can scarcely conclude these observations better than by an extract from a letter published in *The Times* of last Friday, by the Rev. H. A. Woodgate, Rector of Belbroughton, and for many years diocesan inspector of a large district of Church schools in South Staffordshire. He ascribes the short term of education to the inability of the parents as yet to see its full value: and he says:—

"The proposed education rate, therefore, is perfectly useless, unless accompanied by some provision for compelling the attendance of the children. Those persons who are continually citing the systems pursued on the Continent keep out of sight the fact that in most of these this compulsory attendance is enforced. Whether such a plan would be practicable or advisable in England I am not now concerned to show; but that the rest of the measure would be utterly inoperative without it I have not the slightest doubt. It might, however, assist us in determining that question to bear in mind the extreme touchiness of the poorer classes in this respect. As a general rule, the poor are by no means insensible to gratuitous kindness; but, as regards the education of their children,—whether from the anxiety we all display for it, or from whatever cause,—it is difficult to make them understand that we have not some interest in the matter beyond the welfare of their children.

"Any one who has had experience of our National Schools is aware that whenever a parent imagines himself affronted by the managers, whether the parson or his wife, or a committee, whether by punishing for irregular attendance, or by enforcing personal cleanliness, or the requisite cutting of the hair essential for cleanliness, the very first thing he does by way of showing his resentment and of asserting his independence is to remove his child from the school. *Are persons of this kind likely to submit quietly to a compulsory attendance?* For my own part, whatever may be the deficiencies of our present system, I see no reason to despond about it. *It works well as far as it goes;* and if it is not more extensively useful it is not that the means are deficient or the machinery defective, but that those for whose benefit it is designed will not avail themselves of it. There may be no perceptible difference between one year and another, but, taking a longer period—say, ten years—*I see a very great amount of progress;* and to those who will be content to work in faith and patience abundant tokens of the fruit of their labour will present themselves. But if they expect to see the fruit before the seed has had time to germinate, and likewise if, like an impatient child, they are *continually taking up the seed to see if it is growing*, they must, of course, meet with disappointment."

There is a passage in the speech of Lord John Russell which shows it to be absurd to require that the children of the working classes should be compelled to remain at school till they are fifteen years of age. He quotes from the Report of the Rev. Mr. Cook, one of the Inspectors, the following statement of "what he thinks boys of *twelve* years of age "*can do* and *are able to answer*," in the schools under the Committee "inspected by him." The passage is as follows:—

"A boy, of fair average attainments, at the age of 12, in a good school, has learned—1. To read fluently, and with intelligence. 2. To write very neatly and correctly from dictation and from memory. 3. To work all elementary rules of arithmetic with accuracy and rapidity. 4. To parse sentences, but progress in English grammar not satisfactory. 5. To know the elements of English history. 6. In geography the progress is generally satisfactory. 7. The elements of physical science. 8. The principles of political economy, with especial reference to the employment and remuneration of labour. 9. Drawing is taught with great care and skill in several schools."

If this is a correct statement, surely it cuts the ground from beneath the feet of Lord John Russell: for when children of the working classes can make such attainments as these by the time they reach their twelfth year, it would be as great an outrage on common sense as on liberty to insist that they should remain at school *three years longer!*

One more fact as to the actual amount of educational means in the country. The Census of 1851* informs us that the number of persons returned as "teachers" by occupation in England and Wales is no less than 94,878, of whom 27,969 are males, and 66,909 females. The Education Census informs us that the number of teachers in Sunday schools is 318,135. Thus it appears that we have nearly *one hundred thousand* persons engaged in teaching as an occupation, in day schools and various branches of knowledge; and we have more than *three hundred thousand* engaged in giving religious instruction in Sunday schools:—

Teachers by profession	94,878
Sunday school teachers.....	318,135
Total of teachers	413,013

Being 1 *in* 43 *of the whole population, and equal to* 1 *for every* 10 *children of the school age.*

Is it not a perfect farce to be pretending anxiety about the public education, when we have the astonishing number of Four Hundred Thousand Teachers engaged in giving secular and sacred instruction?

I add a single fact, to show the power of the Voluntary system in connexion with religion; and I state it on official authority. Since the year 1844, the Congregational body alone has raised the sum of £195,000 in aid of schools, including the purchase of Homerton College for its Training Institution; in which Institution it has now *forty students*, with upwards of *eight hundred children* in its practising schools at Homerton. And it has done this without the slightest aid from the Government. I need not say that the Church of England has almost unlimited power to extend its educational institutions; and the Wesleyans are at least as able to do it as the Congregationalists.

I have now done my duty, in exposing the extravagance and wrong contained in the plan of Lord John Russell. I appeal to the House of Commons to nip the project in the bud. And still more I appeal to the country to utter its voice in condemnation of a measure so uncalled for and so mischievous.

* Census of 1851.—Ages and Occupations, vol. i., p. ccxviii.

EDWARD BAINES AND SONS, PRINTERS, LEEDS.